
**EVALUATION AND REPORT OF PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING IDENTIFIED GOALS
AND PRIORITIES AND USE OF TITLE I FUNDS FOR INNOVATION AND
EXPANSION ACTIVITIES**

4.12(e)

VR achieved or made substantial progress towards achieving the goals, priorities and innovation and expansion activities established for FFY 2005.

Progress is described below.

Goal #	Description	Goal	Achieved
Goal 1	Employers will use VR as a primary source for disability-related solutions and qualified employees.	302 Employer-Initiated Contacts	525 Employer Initiated Contacts
Goal 2	VR will enhance its business services component by continuing the Rural Services Initiative targeting agri-business.	Continue implementation of Rural Services	Implementation continued and MOU signed with ND Agriculture Dept.
Goal 3	All VR Counselors and Regional Administrators will meet the Qualified Rehabilitation Professional Standards within 5 years of hire.	100%	100%
Goal 4	897 individuals with disabilities will become employed	897	929 (876 110 clients 53 SEP clients)
Goal 5	80% will remain employed 9 months after employment (6 months after closure)	80%	92%
Goal 6	The rehab rate will be 65%	65%	69%
Goal 7	6943 individuals will receive VR services	6943 (6693 110 clients 250 SEP clients)	7084 (6834 110 clients 250 SEP clients)
Goal 8	75% will have a severe disability	75%	85%

Goal #	Description	Goal	Achieved
Goal 9	100% of VR clients who receive an assistive technology device, after consultation with the Interagency Project for Assistive technology, will be able to perform the desired function(s) on the device.	100%	100% on June 30, 2005. Discontinued after that. IPAT no longer administered by the DSU
Goal 10	90% of client issues with VR will be resolved prior to a fair hearing	90%	100%

Priorities and innovation and expansion activities identified in the state plan updates effective October 1, 2005 that were not specifically addressed through the goals above are described below.

✓ **Improved Transition services**

Through the Rehabilitation Services Council, the ad hoc Transition Committee continues to work on specific transition issues as they arise. This year the DPI representative on the Council and VR's Chief of Field Services began traveling to the regional VR offices to assist in establishing, reestablishing or supporting regional Transition Teams.

Two VR staff are members of the Statewide Transition Steering Council. VR was also part of multi-agency team that participated in a National Transition Conference for the second year in a row to identify ways to improve Transition services in the state.

VR had its second printing of a popular Transition CD and planning document. This originated as a joint project with the Department of Public Instruction to be used by students, parents, teachers, counselors and others during the Transition process.

✓ **Increased emphasis on public education and information**

The SRC and VR state and regional administrators met in early May 2005 to identify priority areas to strengthen VR services in North Dakota. Some of the action steps identified after that meeting resulted in 2 publications: A Legislative Meeting Guide and a VR At-A-Glance Fact Sheet.

In addition to exceeding the number of employer-initiated contacts through VR's Business Services, 290 group presentations were made reaching 3771 individuals.

✓ **Continued collaboration with other agencies**

VR entered into an MOU with the National Telecommuting Institute (NTI) to expand home-based employment opportunities for VR clients.

The memorandum of understanding for transition services, developed with the Department of Public Instruction, State Board of Vocational & Technical Education, School to Work and Job Service remains in effect.

VR's memorandum of understanding with Job Services to provide conditional certification as a partner in the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program is still in effect.

VR staff is involved in the Comprehensive Employment Services Project that is the most recent initiative through the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant.

✓ **Working with partners under the Workforce Investment Act to strengthen relationships and streamline referrals to appropriate providers.**

VR provided disability-related information for inclusion in the revised WIA plan due May 31, 2005. Workforce investment partners continue to be invited to attend VR sponsored disability training including training on the ADA. VR is also available to assist other components of the statewide workforce investment system regarding disability-related issues.

In September 2005, a VR staff person joined the Director of the Workforce Development Council and two others from North Dakota to represent North Dakota at the national session entitled: *Workforce Data Feast: Customizing Your State's Menu for Integrated Performance Information*. This same VR staff is a member of a Workforce Development Council committee looking at integrated performance measures for WIA partners in North Dakota. A second VR staff also participates on the committee.

One VR staff person is a member of the statewide Workforce Development Youth Council.

Other cooperative agreements as required in WIA remain under construction.

✓ **Staff participation in economic development & community activities**

Various additional collaborative activities continue to occur at the state and regional levels between VR and local agencies, employers and economic development groups. See *Attachment 4.9(c)* for a description of the some of the major activities.

- ✓ **North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation met or exceeded all but one of the standards and indicators during FFY 2005.**

The standard not achieved was 2.1, Service Rate to Minorities. VR narrowly missed the same standard in FFY 2004 so, in consultation with the State Rehabilitation Council, analysis was already underway. At the time this FFY 2007 update was submitted, VR was working with RSA to finalize a Program Improvement Plan addressing service rate to minorities.

- ✓ **Increased communication & collaboration with 121 Projects**

Both the state and regional vocational rehabilitation offices provide technical assistance to the four 121 projects, as requested. In addition, vocational rehabilitation has itinerant counselors who visit the reservations to work together with the projects to provide services otherwise not available, or to meet with those individuals who prefer to work with vocational rehabilitation.

Vocational rehabilitation invited 121 Project staff to all training activities coordinated through our office.

During the summer of 2005 one of the 121 projects serving North Dakota ran out of funding prior to the end of the fiscal year. VR assisted the 121 project in meeting short-term client needs through Services to Groups.

During FFY 05, innovation and expansion funds were spent on ADA, Transition Services and Rehabilitation Services Council expenses.